

**SOUTH ASIA FACULTY SUGGESTED EDITS TO CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK**

February 24, 2016

**Grade Six – World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations**

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p. 182, line 179 instead of “Northern India” use “Indus Valley Civilization”

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p. 184, lines 216-217: "Sasanian Empires in Persia, the Kushan Empire in Central Asia, the Maurya Empire in India, and the kingdom of Kush in the upper Nile River valley" is OK because even the contemporary Seleucid Greeks called the Mauryas an Indian Empire (India/Indika being Greek terms).

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p. 191 line 381 add Pakistan to read “Indus Valley River in India and Pakistan.” The Indus valley is largely in present day Pakistan.

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On p. 201, line 567: "Arabian Peninsula, India and equatorial Africa" should be changed to "Arabian Peninsula, the Indian Ocean littoral and equatorial Africa". This is more accurate because of the evidence of trading connections between ports of the Red Sea and ports along the Arabian Sea in present day Pakistan and India

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p. 209, lines 756-760: In the sentence: "The following two centuries are known as the Hellenistic period. “Hellenistic” refers to the influence of Greek cultural forms in regions far beyond the Aegean, though in fact a lively interchange of products and ideas took place in the broad region from the Mediterranean to India", it would be more accurate to change India here to "the Indian subcontinent."

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p. 210 line 744 While “The Early civilization of India” is standard, we recommend changing to ‘Early Civilization of South Asia?’ so that teachers are able to convey to students that the Indus civilization is shared between modern day Pakistan and India.

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p. 210 line 776 Change ‘Harappa’ to “Indus”

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p. 210 Lines 777-778: we recommend deleting reference to Hinduism and replacing with, “How did the religion of Ancient India support individuals, rulers and societies”

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p.210 Line 780: ***How did the environment influence the emergence and decline of the Harappa civilization?***

We recommend changing “Harappa Civilization” to “Indus Civilization” or “Indus Valley Civilization” to conform to the usage of scholars, for whom the Indus Valley denotes the *civilization*, and Harappa denotes a *culture* (particular style of pottery and other artifacts).

The term Harappan Civilization is not correct and is a misuse of the term.

[NB: This change will also strengthen the linkage between the civilization and its environment, which is the theme, and its parallel with the China section, both of them emphasizing river valleys. Discussion of landscape and monsoon is excellent. We recommend some explicit linking statement that expands upon the “rich soil” idea, to the effect that the soil is favorable to the beginnings of *agriculture* and formation of *farming* villages, again parallel with the China section].

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p. 210, lines 780-782: "During the Harappa civilization, the Vedic period, and the Maurya Empire, how did the connections between India and other regions of Afroeurasia increase?" Here "Harappa" should be changed to "Indus" and "India" to "the Indian subcontinent".

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p. 210 line 783: Change India to “South Asia”

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p. 210, lines 788-9: We recommend dropping reference to the Saraswati/Sarasvati River in this sentence where it is superfluous and on

p. 212, line 818 where there is no geo-archeological evidence to support the claim (see Appendix 3). Mention of this one tributary of the Ghaggar-Hakra River (and not others) is grist for a small group of scholars, who hold, against available evidence that peoples of the Indus Valley Civilization spoke Sanskrit and that the Rg Veda coincides with, or even predates the IVC.

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p. 211, line 794: "describe the physical features of the Indus and Ganges river systems in India" should be changed to in the "Indian subcontinent".

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p. 211, Lines 805-809: We recommend changing the following sentence as there is no clear linkage of Hinduism to IVC:

“Some of the statues and figurines show features that are all present in modern Hinduism, such as a male figure that resembles the Hindu God Shiva in meditating posture. Replace with:

“Although not much is known about the religious practices and beliefs of the Indus Valley civilization, some form of mother goddess may have been worshipped.”

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p. 211, line 811: "A flourishing urban civilization developed in India from as early as 3300 BCE along the Indus River" - here "India" should be changed to the "South Asia"

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p. 212, Line 817: We recommend deleting “deforestation” from this sentence, as there is no evidence for this.

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pg. 212, line 828: There is a typo our initial recommendation: We recommend changing “Telagu” to “Telugu”

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p. 213 Line 837: ***How did the religion of Hinduism support individuals, rulers, and societies?***  
Change “Religion of Hinduism to “Religion of Ancient India”

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Later in the Vedic period, new commercial towns arose along the Ganges, India’s second great river system. In this era, Vedic culture (or Brahmanism in the existing standards) emerged as a belief system that combined the beliefs of Indic speakers with those of older populations. Teachers focus students on the question: How did the religion of **Hinduism** support individuals, rulers, and societies? Brahmins, that is, priestly families, assumed authority over complex devotional rituals, **but many important sages, such as Valmiki and Vyasa, were not Brahmins.** (p. 212-13)

There is a shift here from Vedic culture Brahmanism to Hinduism that is unwarranted in this passage. It is important to note that Vedic and non-Vedic traditions are as a part of the larger Indic tradition and not just Hinduism.

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p. 212 There is a problem in taking ancient South Asia to be coterminous with the Vedas, with Sanskrit, and with Hinduism. This excludes the great corpus of Sanskrit literary, scientific, philosophical and inscriptional texts and the entire Sangam tradition of Tamil literature, which again cannot be reduced to Hinduism.

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p. 212 Lines 819-21 We recommend changing this sentence, “Indian history then entered the Vedic period (ca. 1500-500 BCE), an era named for the *Vedas*, Sanskrit religious texts passed on for generations through a complex oral tradition.

Replace with:

“Ancient South Asia experienced a Vedic period (ca. 1500-500 BCE), named for the *Vedas* which were composed in Sanskrit. While Sanskrit texts, both religious and secular, continued to be produced in subsequent centuries, texts in Old Tamil also began to appear around 300 BCE, and Tamil literary production flourished during the Sangam period in South India in following centuries. Sanskrit **and** Tamil texts passed on for generations through a complex oral tradition.

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p. 212, Lines 831-2: We recommend deleting, “There is another point of view that suggests that the language was indigenous to India and spread northward, but it is a minority position.”

There is too little scholarly evidence to permit this hypothesis to be represented in a sixth-grade textbook. The most recent scholarship (e.g., Asko Parpola, Roots of Hinduism. OUP: 2015) reasserts the standard view.

P. 213, Line 837: We recommend deleting “Hinduism” from this passage, and substituting the word “Vedas” so that the question reads, “How did the religion of the Vedas...”

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P. 213, Lines 839-40: We recommend deleting “but many important sages such as Valmiki and Vyasa, were not Brahmins” since this information is incorrect (both were Brahmins).

p. 213 Lines 841-2: “The Hindu tradition is thus monistic, the idea of reality being a unitary whole.”

This is a broad generalization that is not applicable to many practices and beliefs regarded as part of Hinduism; it privileges certain Advaita beliefs. We recommend deleting this sentence.

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p. 24 Line 866: delete “self-governing” from sentence. There is no evidence to this effect.

p. 213 Lines 846-848: This sentence is inaccurate, “Vedic teachings gradually built up a rich body of spiritual and moral teachings that formed **the** foundation of Hinduism as it is practiced today” and recommend it be changed to “Vedic teachings gradually built up a rich body of spiritual and moral teachings that form a **key** foundation of Hinduism as it is practiced today.”

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p. 214 Lines 860-64: This sentence is inaccurate and misleading: “Many of the central practices of Hinduism today, including home and temple worship, yoga and meditation, rites of passage (samskaras), festivals, pilgrimage, respect for saints and gurus, **and, above all, a profound acceptance of religious diversity, developed over this period.**”

There are clear differences between Vedism and what is generally referred to as Hinduism, contrary to the statement that the major components of Hinduism are “...easily discernible in the Vedic period...” We recommend deleting a “profound acceptance for religious diversity” from the above sentence as there was much internal conflict and persecution among sects during the Vedic Period which eventually contributed to the emergence of Jainism and Buddhism.

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pg. 214 Lines 872-74: We recommend changing “A person belonged to a particular Varna by his professional excellence and his good conduct, not by birth itself” to “A person belonged to a particular varna not just by his professional excellence and his good conduct, **but mainly by birth.**”

The ideal of caste included the idea that professional excellence and good conduct situated a member in that caste, but not necessarily in practice. At the core of varna ideology and its representation in the Hindu religious texts is the idea of the four orders and the birth of a person into one of the orders. Because the varna order is based on the notion of “by birth,” it guarantees the superiority of the Brahmin. A Shudra or a Vaisya cannot be a Brahmin. This principle, birth into a varna, also guarantees notions of ritual purity and impurity.

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p. 215, line 887-9: eliminate end of sentence “which can make the “caste” label offensive.” This is untrue, social science does not make the caste label offensive. Caste is most offensive to people discriminated by it.

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p. 215 891-892 delete “rather than” and replace with “as well as” in the sentence "Teachers should make clear to students that this was a social and cultural structure rather than a religious belief."

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p. 215: Line 894-95: “fewer property rights than men.” We recommend changing *fewer* to little property rights when compared with men, akin to the other ancient kingdoms and societies.

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p. 215 line 896 Change “They participated equally with their husbands in religious ceremonies and festival celebrations” to “They participated in religious ceremonies and festival celebrations, though not as equals.”

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p. 215 Line 899: Other versions of the Ramayana may include a more nuanced, critical evaluation of Rama’s roles, and it may be helpful to introduce students to the different versions of the Ramayana.

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p. 215 Lines 902-903: change “the correct moral decision” to “important moral decisions” The moral quandaries of the Ramayana continue to be debated among Hindus in various versions of the Ramayana

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***How did the religion of Buddhism support individuals, rulers, and societies?*** pp. 216-17.

We recommend addition of an opening sentence for this section, something like this: “At the end of the Vedic period, about the sixth century BCE, there arose many who renounced family life and became wandering teachers of new philosophies of life. Two of the most successful were Siddhartha Gautama, called the Buddha (“the awakened one”) and the Mahavira (“the great hero”). The religions they taught are Buddhism and Jainism. Buddhism spread very widely beyond South Asia, throughout Central, East and Southeast Asia.

The characterization of the teachings of these two religions is extremely brief.

We recommend adding something like this: Buddhism teaches that the path to liberation from the wheel of death and rebirth is through the suppression of selfish desires. It teaches that the world is impermanent, that the self is an illusion, and that suffering is rooted in the false belief in the self.

We recommend for Jainism something like this: “Jainism promoted the idea of *ahimsa* (non-violence to all life), which was taken up by Buddhists and Hindus, especially in the form of vegetarianism.

Pg. 216 line 912- We recommend deleting “his Hindu background” from this sentence, “Through the story of his life, his **Hindu background**, and his search for enlightenment, students may learn about his fundamental ideas: suffering, compassion, and mindfulness.” The Buddha was a member of the Sakyā clan; nothing called Hinduism existed at this moment in time; the word “princely” may also be substituted for “Hindu.”

Pg. 216 We recommend changing this sentence so that it does not appear as if Buddhism completely disappeared in India and was replaced by Hinduism,

Line 914: “Buddhism waned in India in the late first millennium CE as the result of a resurgence of Hindu tradition”

Either delete “as the result of a resurgence of Hindu tradition” or replace with, “Although Buddhism waned in the Indian subcontinent in the late first millennium CE for reasons that scholars continue to puzzle out, vibrant Buddhist communities still thrive in India, Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka.”

p. 216 line 916, In the sentence, “Buddhist monks, nuns, and merchants, **however**, carried their religion to Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Central Asia, China, and Southeast Asia” we recommend replacing “however,” with “also.”

p. 216-17 ***During the Maurya Empire, how did the connections between India and other regions of Afroeurasia increase?***

This is the shortest and least developed section, and it does not respond to the various parts of the question.

We recommend at least one sentence be written devoted to each of the three subjects: the Indus Valley (not Harappa) civilization, the Vedic period, and the Maurya Empire, giving examples of how each was connected with regions outside India.

We recommend changing the sentence on Chandragupta Maurya to, "A period of prolonged military struggle between the republics and kingdoms of North India culminated in the victory of Chandragupta Maurya and the first large-scale empire of India in 321 BCE, comparable to the Warring States period in China and its first unification under the Qin slightly later."

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## **Grade Seven--World History and Geography, Medieval and Modern Times**

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p. 235, line 65: replace India with "South Asia"

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p. 239, line 146: Use "South Asia" instead of India because many of the kingdoms in question also straddled territories in present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan.

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p. 248, lines 327-8: in the sentence "...mounted warrior armies from Central Eurasia caused problems for China, India, and Persia..." should be replaced with "...mounted warrior armies from Central Eurasia caused problems for *empires and kingdoms* in China, India, and Persia..."

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p. 255, lines 478-9: in the sentence "geographical factors put Southwestern Asia and Arab, Persian, and Indian merchants and sailors" I would replace "Indian" here with "South Asian" keeping in mind the extension of the Indian coastline to parts of Thatta and Sind that are today in Pakistan.

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p. 257, lines 524-5: "...the Umayyad Caliphate extended from Spain to northern India" should be changed to "...the Umayyad Caliphate extended from Spain all the way to the valley of the Indus". This would be inclusive of the Arabs and other contemporary, local inhabitants of places like Mansura and Multan.

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p. 258, lines 559-560: "The city's culture was a mix of Arab, Persian, Indian, Turkish, and Central Asian culture" Change to "The culture of this city was a mix of Arab, Persian, South Asian, Turkish, and Central Asian elements."

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p. 260 line 593 change "India" to South Asia

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p. 264 Lines 680-681: Insert "what some scholars have termed" so sentence reads, "The Gupta monarchs reunified much of the subcontinent in the third century CE, ushering in what some scholars have termed the "Classical Age" of India.

“South Asia, 300-1200” pp. 264-8

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p. 264 lines 686-688: Change “The level of interaction in all aspects of life—commercial, cultural, religious—among the people of various parts of India...” to “The level of interaction in all aspects of life—commercial, cultural, religious—among *peoples across various regions of the Indian subcontinent...*”

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Pg. 264: lines 703-4—We recommend deleting this part of the sentence, “who had three aspects: Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the keeper, and Siva, the destroyer.” This is inaccurate; much bhakti devotionalism is in fact focused on Ram or Krishna as manifestations of the Lord.

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Pg. 264: line 709---We recommend adding a sentence to the following effect: The Bhakti movement also critiqued the power held by priestly elites.

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p. 265, line 691: “Sanskrit became the principal literary language throughout India” seems too big a claim. We suggest changing to “Sanskrit became the principle literary language in many regions of the Indian subcontinent”

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p. 265, line 692: Change “Enduring contributions of ancient Indian civilization to other areas of Afroeurasia” to “Enduring contributions of South Asian culture and civilization to other areas of Afroeurasia”

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p. 265, lines 697-8: Change “After the fall of the Gupta Empire, India had many states.” to “After the fall of the Gupta Empire, the Indian subcontinent was divided into a number of regional states and kingdoms”

p. 265 lines 703-4: “Building on their previous study of Hinduism in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, students study the question: **How did Hinduism change over time?**” Replace the study of “Hinduism” with the study of “the religion of ancient India”

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p. 265 line 712: Change “Even though India was not unified into one state, nor did its people belong to a single religion...” to “Even though India was not unified *under one empire or religion...*”

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p. 265 Replace “India” on lines 733 and 735 with “Indian subcontinent”

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p. 266, lines 715-717 Change “How did Indian monks, nuns, merchants, travelers, and states spread religious ideas and practices and cultural styles of art and architecture to Central and Southeast Asia?” to “*How did monks, nuns, merchants, travelers, and empires from South Asia spread religious ideas and practices and cultural styles of art and architecture to Central and Southeast Asia?*”

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p. 266 line 718: Change “...trade connections between India and Southeast Asia” to “...trade connections between *South and Southeast Asia*;”

p. 266 lines 732-33: change to "Buddhist missionaries and travelers carried Buddhism from *the Indian subcontinent* to Central Asia and then to China"

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p. 266 line 735: change "India" to Indian subcontinent.

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p. 267, lines 741-742: "Xuanzang, who departed from China in 627 CE on pilgrimage to Buddhist holy sites in *present day Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Nepal*";

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267 lines 747-748: "After 1000, Turks from Central Asia, who were recent converts to Islam, began to conquer states in northwestern India" could read "After 1000, Turks from Central Asia, who were recent converts to Islam, began *to expand their territory across the Indus Valley to parts of the northern Indian plains*" (NB: the Ghaznavid Empire ruled over parts of present day Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kashmir, with a swathe of territory west of the River Yamuna, which is why NW India is misleading).

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p. 267 line 754 replace "India" with Indian subcontinent

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pp. 279 line 966 replace "India" with "Indus Valley"

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p. 287, lines 1148-9: "In the center, the Muslim world (now divided into many states) and India prospered..." gives the impression that parts of India were not part of the 'Muslim world'. We suggest changing this to "*At the center, the world of Islamic civilization stretching from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean region, prospered...*"

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p. 290, lines 1206-7: "Other Turkish dynasties took over Persia (the Safavids) and northern India (the Mughals)" should read "Other Turkish dynasties took over Persia under Safavid rule and *parts of the Indian subcontinent* under Mughals rule" - NB. Kabul, Lahore and Delhi were all Mughal cities;

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p. 290 line 1214: Change "...spices from India and Southeast Asia" to "...spices from *South* and Southeast Asia..."

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p. 295, line 1328: "devastation of Indian populations" should be "*Native American* populations"

p. 297, line 1372 the subhead: "Why did the Europeans use colonialism to interact with Native Americans and some Southeast Asians?" should say "South and East Asians" not "Southeast Asians" (Southeast Asia is a different geographical area, e.g. Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines, etc).

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p. 297 lines 1376-1377: "...the major Afroeurasian centers – China, India, and the Islamic World – were too strong for Europeans to conquer." - this formulation is problematic because Mughal India was very much part of the 'Islamic World'. We suggest changing to the sentence to read "... the major Afroeurasian centers of power – the Islamic Empires and China – were too strong for Europeans to conquer."

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### **How did world religions change and spread during the early modern period?**

p. 307 lines 1549-1562 consider substituting this passage for the current version:

Around 1520, Nanak (1469-1539), a religious thinker and poet of significant talent acquired a piece of land on the banks of the river Ravi, founded a new town named Kartarpur ("Creator's town") in the region called the Punjab, and presently split between India and Pakistan. There he gathered a group of families that did farming for sustenance. Overtime, this community evolved into a world religion with twenty-five million adherents scattered around the globe. In his compositions, Nanak sang of God who brought the creation into being and oversees its activity with great degree of concern. Nanak expected human beings to be in constant awareness of divine immanence around them, and as a result live a life of personal purity, hard work, and social productivity. As the Sikh community expanded they came into conflict with the Mughal rulers of the time, and this confrontation eventually resulted in the Sikhs establishing their own rule in the Punjab.

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## **Grade Eight – United States History and Geography: Growth and Conflict**

### **Who came to the United States at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century?**

p. 364, line 264, Change Hindu and Sikh to "South Asian (mostly Sikh)" in the sentence, "California also came to play an increasingly significant role in the national economy. The Gold Rush in California, the building of the transcontinental railroad, and agricultural labor in Hawaii and the mainland spurred Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, Hindu, and Sikh immigration to the United States."

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## **Grade Nine – Elective Courses in History–Social Science**

### **The Humanities pp. 403-5**

p. 405 Lines 455-458

See recommendation on pp. 10-11 of November 18, 2015 report. We suggest also that these texts might productively be divided into literary and scriptural texts rather than grouping them all as "classical texts." The Quran is conspicuous by its absence, and should be added. Perhaps "Sri Guru Granth Sahib" be recorded as the Guru Granth in Lines 456-7.

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## **Grade Ten – World History, Culture, and Geography: The Modern World**

### **The World in 1750 pp .424-7**

On p. 424 the framework proposes to discuss the "end of the pre-modern world", without saying anything about what can be reliably construed as a working definition of modernity. Is the criterion based on an assessment of technological progress, economic advancement or proximity to a form of capitalist production? Or is it a contemporary awareness of these or similar criteria? The construction also implies that all the societies in question somehow shared the same historic moment and experience. This kind of account does not take into account the Portuguese and Spanish expansion in parts of the New World, littoral Africa and maritime Asia centuries before, or the rise of mercantile corporations representing national empires (especially, Dutch, French and English), and therefore the uneven chronology of European expansion at the expense of the Asian empires.

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p. 425 seems to suggest that something like "divine right" existed in most contemporary empires of the 18th century, including those far away from Europe such as Mughal India or Safavid Iran. Divine right is a very specific example of divinely mandated rule, which in itself is problematic in the context of Mughal India (where the emperor as spiritual guide) or Qing China (heavenly mandate).

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### **Rise of Imperialism and Colonialism pp. 442-453**

#### **How did colonization work?**

p.448 Lines 552-4: Change "They also attempted to change practices involving marriage and women's social roles to infuse Western notions of progress into the basic structures of society" to "They also attempted to reform practices involving marriage and women's social roles.""

**Rights, Religion, and Identity** pp. 496-8.

On p. 498 Lines 1484-1489 we recommend that the sentences, “Anti-Western violence perpetrated by the followers of a fundamentalist version of Islam has contributed to the appearance of deep conflict between the Islamic and Western worlds, especially since 9/11. Students should learn about the roots of modern Islamic extremism by reading a variety of sources from Egyptian writers and the Muslim Brotherhood, for example” be changed to,

“Anti-Western violence has contributed to the appearance of deep conflict between the West and other parts of the world. Students should learn about the roots of modern religious extremism by reading a variety of sources from Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Hindu and Buddhist nationalist texts.”

The sentences imply that anti-Western violence has escalated since 9/11 when there have been ongoing attacks in Europe from the 1970s unrelated to Islamic extremism.

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Lines 1489-90: We recommend deleting this sentence, “Historical memories of earlier conflicts, such as the Crusades, have inflamed a contemporary “clash of civilizations.”

The idea of a “clash of civilizations” is an academic one, and while it has gained popular currency, scholars of conflict would not say that historical memories of the Crusades are behind much current conflict. This is an inaccurate and misleading statement that implies that what people think about the Crusades is more responsible for current violence than the recent legacy of US interventions abroad.

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